VARONIS

How a Large Ecommerce Marketplace Locked Down Globally Accessible Files by 99.9% in Under 3 Weeks

791,000+
open access folders remediated

4-5
hours saved per week on reporting

> “I know the size and location of data, whether or not it’s sensitive, who has permission to edit, and who is accessing it. There’s no way I could even find that information without Varonis.”

ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY:

Our client is an international ecommerce marketplace. We have happily accommodated their request to anonymize all names & places.

HIGHLIGHTS

CHALLENGES

- Cleaning up over 800,000 folders with open access
- Locking down sensitive data for CCPA compliance
- Finding and fixing issues, such as stale SharePoint sites and user accounts

SOLUTION

The most robust data security platform:

- **DatAdvantage** monitors data access and activity online and on prem
- **Automation Engine** safely removes global access groups
- **DatAlert** monitors and alerts on critical systems
- **Data Classification Engine** finds and classifies sensitive data
- **Policy Pack** enhances Data Classification Engine with GDPR and CCPA patterns
- **DatAnswers** streamlines DSAR fulfillment

RESULTS

- Reduced folders with open access from 800,000 to 8,700 within 2 ½ weeks
- 3–5 hours saved per week on reporting + immeasurable time savings on remediation
- The road to CCPA compliance is clearly laid out and attainable

Challenges

Managing nearly 800,000 overexposed folders

When the Senior Information Systems Engineer for a large ecommerce marketplace (anonymous by request) started their proof of concept (POC) with Varonis, they weren't entirely sure what to expect.

They knew that they needed to lock down sensitive data. They knew reporting on it was important for CCPA compliance. They also knew they needed more visibility into permission structures.

They didn't expect to learn that they had **about 800,000 overexposed folders**—which they only discovered thanks to a complimentary Varonis Data Risk Assessment.

> "We had files across basically every file server that were just wide open to everyone in the company," the Senior Engineer says. "It was eye-opening and a shock, honestly. It showed me that people basically never clean up their fileshares."

Many of the overexposed folders contained sensitive data, including PCI and PII, and data protected under the CCPA and GDPR. A data breach would have been disastrous.

> “We discovered that one of the big issues was people sharing sensitive files externally via SharePoint. People would send out a sharing link that wasn’t set to expire automatically. Those links would still be active and open years later.”

The POC revealed other issues too, including 700 stale user accounts and a large amount of stale data. These issues increased risk and inflated data storage costs.

> “We had over 600 SharePoint sites. I was stunned. You can’t easily see that from the Azure page because a lot of those are subsites. But even if you’re not actively maintaining the folders in Azure, you’re still being billed.”

For the first time, the engineer had visibility into enterprise data and the ability to prioritize remediation efforts.

> “Without Varonis, I’d only have pieces—not the whole picture. I wouldn’t understand the risk. With the proof of concept, I was able to get a lot of data and show management the extent of the problem that I was trying to deal with.”

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Solution

Putting risk remediation on autopilot

After assessing the risk, the Senior Engineer was mentally prepared for a long and arduous clean up. They thought they’d have to go through every folder one by one, fixing permissions along the way.

> “I thought, ‘It’s going to take a long time just to write the PowerShell scripts, and a really long time after that to run the scripts.’”

But then their Varonis representative explained how DatAdvantage and Automation Engine could expedite that tedious and time-consuming process, rendering it completely painless:

- **DatAdvantage** for Directory Services, Exchange, OneDrive, SharePoint, and Azure Active Directory gives total visibility of on-prem and cloud environments. With it, the Senior Engineer can audit every file touch and safely clean up rampant over-permissiveness.

- → **Automation Engine** expedites the process by automatically remediating open access of hundreds or even thousands of folders.

> “Varonis told me, ‘Each server will be fixed within a day or two.’ I thought, ‘No way,’ but they were as good as their word. It was all done through the application and I didn’t have to touch anything. We basically pointed to a folder and it was done.”

The Senior Engineer can perform all of this remediation from one central location, bypassing the need to foist extra work on busy department heads.

> “It used to be hard to clean up department servers. You’d try to convince people to clean up stale data, but they didn’t have time. Now I can print out a report with all of the folders that have 10-year-old stale files on them, ask them if they need those old files, and then delete it on the backend.”

The ecommerce company also adopted **DatAlert**, to monitor and alert on critical systems, alongside three other Varonis solutions to facilitate ongoing compliance efforts:

Data Classification Engine	Finds and classifies sensitive data, such as PII and PCI, across all systems.
Policy Pack	Enhances Data Classification Engine by discovering and classifying data specifically protected under GDPR and CCPA.

DatAnswers	Makes files containing sensitive data easily searchable, so data subject access requests (DSARs) can be fulfilled in mere minutes.

The Senior Engineer didn't need to DIY a security solution within PowerShell. With Varonis, they had the visibility and integrated capabilities to quickly and effectively secure data, lock down permissions, and report on their progress.

> "I know the size and location of data, whether or not it's sensitive, who has permission to edit, and who is accessing it. There's no way I could even find that information without Varonis.
>
> Now I maintain a cybersecurity PowerPoint for our executives. I can quickly create a top-level picture of the progress we're making as we clean up stale files and sensitive data."

> "[Remediation] was all done through the application and I didn't have to touch anything. We basically just pointed to a folder and it was done."

Results

Number of folders with open access reduced by 99.9%

With Varonis, the ecommerce marketplace successfully reduced their overexposure by 99.9%—**going from over 800,000 folders with open access to just 8,700 within just two-and-a-half weeks.**

Thanks to Automation Engine, remediation was nearly effortless. And while it worked away in the background, the Senior Engineer focused on securing sensitive data and cleaning up stale files.

> “We’re making steady progress. The number of Microsoft Teams is going down as we clean up old ones. Total files are going down as we eliminate stale data. All those things are trending downward.”

The Senior Engineer says that Varonis’ reporting feature alone saves them “at least four hours a week,” and when it comes to fixing open access and managing data, the time savings are innumerable.

> “Finding these issues takes a huge amount of time. Fixing them is another mountain entirely. Varonis helps you take that big first step automatically, shows you the big picture, and helps you get started. It saves a lot of time.”

In terms of compliance, the Senior Engineer now has the tools to prove that they’re taking all the necessary steps. Total visibility mitigates the risk that sensitive data will slip through the cracks, and Varonis streamlines everything from DSARs to compliance reports.

> “With Varonis, we can see all the classifications on all the data. We have more insight into what we need to keep and for how long. We’re able to clean up stale data and sensitive data at the same time, and that’s helping us a lot with regards to compliance.”

Now the Senior Engineer recommends Varonis to colleagues, but cautions them: “Go for it, but prepare to be shocked. Nobody else gives you the big picture behind a single pane of glass.”

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